

# ***CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN***

## **INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that the City and County prepare a Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) outlining how the City and County will incorporate public input into the development of the Consolidated Plan and its associated documents. The following document is the City and County's CPP.

A Citizen Participation Plan is developed because citizen participation is a vital component of a successful Consolidated Planning process. (In this section the term "Consolidated Planning process" shall mean the development of the Consolidated Plan, annual action plans, performance reports and/or amendments). Such participation provides for public involvement in the development of City and County priorities affecting the funding priorities of the CDBG, HOME and other sources of Federal funding.

The Citizen Participation Plan has been designed to reach out to the following groups of potential participants:

Citizens  
Elected officials  
Non-profit organizations  
Public housing residents  
Social service providers  
Other interested parties

## **PLAN STRUCTURE**

This plan will cover the citizen participation requirements for the development of the Consolidated Plan as well as the annual action plans, performance reports and amendments.

Several elements, including participation, access to meetings, access to information, technical assistance, comments and timely response, are identical for the various plans and reports that comprise the Consolidated Planning process. Under other elements such as outreach efforts, public hearings and preparation of draft plan, the Consolidated Plan requirements differ slightly from the Action Plan requirements. In these areas the requirements for each type of plan will be broken out.

## **PARTICIPATION**

It is the goal of the City and County to take all actions necessary to encourage the participation of City and County residents, including low, very low, and extremely low-income residents, minorities and non-English speaking persons, public housing residents, as well as persons with mobility, visual or hearing impairments and disabilities, in the Consolidated Planning process.

To ensure broad and successful public participation, the City and County have assured the following:

- All aspects of citizen participation are conducted in an open manner with freedom of access for all interested parties
- All Consolidated Planning process hearings and meetings are open to the public with opportunities for public participation. All hearings and meeting are announced by legal notices in the Poughkeepsie Journal and the Poughkeepsie Beat ( the City's two official newspapers) and the Hudson Valley Black Press, which is the largest minority newspaper in the County. A mailing is also sent to the City and County's Consolidated Plan mailing lists, which is described below.
- Every effort will be made to provide citizens participating in the Consolidated Planning process with adequate and timely information so that they can be involved in making decisions at various stages of the process. These efforts will include public notices and direct mailings. The City and County have developed comprehensive Consolidated Plan mailing lists as part of this effort.
- In acknowledging the importance of the support of the elected officials, in the City of Poughkeepsie Common Council Members shall be given an opportunity to participate in the Consolidated Planning process. In the County, County Legislators and Mayors and Supervisors will be given an opportunity to participate in the Consolidated Planning process. They will be forwarded all public notices and meeting mailings noted above.
- Continuity of participation is assured throughout the Consolidated Planning process by the dissemination of information to the Consolidated Plan mailing lists.
- Modifications to the CDBG or HOME Program activities shall be made only in accordance with the procedures outlined in this document.

## **PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS**

The City and County will take steps to assure that the residents of public housing are included in the Consolidated Planning process. Toward this end the City and County will include public housing agencies on the outreach mailing list.

## **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

The City and County will afford adequate, timely notification of all hearings/meetings to encourage citizen attendance. The City and County will publish notices in local newspapers at least five days prior to the scheduled hearings/meetings. Further, the City and County will assure that all meetings/hearings associated with the Consolidated Planning process will be held in locations that are considered accessible.

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Citizens, public agencies and other interested parties, including low income groups most affected by CDBG and HOME funding allocations, will have the opportunity to receive information, review and submit comments on any proposed submission concerning the amount of funds available, including the estimated amount proposed to benefit low, very low, and extremely low-income residents as discussed above.

## **ACCESS TO DOCUMENTATION**

Documents relevant to the Consolidated Planning process will be available to citizens upon written request. Access shall be governed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. A public file of all documents (mailings, promotional literature, records of hearings, regulations, prior applications, letters of approval, performance reports, evaluation reports, other reports required by HUD, and the proposed and approved Consolidated Plan and related documents) will be kept by the City and County.

## **OUTREACH EFFORTS**

The City and County's broad outreach efforts were noted under the "Participation" section of this plan. However, there are specific outreach efforts for the different activities that comprise the Consolidated Planning process. These activities are outlined below.

### Consolidated Plan

A direct mailing will be completed at the beginning of the Consolidated Plan development process. This mailing will notify interested parties of the beginning of the development process and invite them to the first public hearing. The purpose of the first public hearing is outlined below in the public hearing section of this Plan. A legal notice will be placed as noted the participation section of this plan.

During the preparation of the Consolidated Plan the City and County will conduct all outreach necessary to create an accurate and comprehensive Consolidated Plan. This outreach may include interviews, surveys, focus groups and other mechanisms determined to be effective in outreaching to the community.

Upon the completion of the draft Plan, the City and County will publish a notice of the availability of the draft Plan and invite the public will also be invited to a second public hearing.

### Annual Action Plan

Prior to the beginning of each Fiscal Year the City and County are required to complete Action Plans that outline the activities the City and County intend to undertake with CDBG and HOME funds. The citizen participation process is initiated at the beginning of the Action Plan process and involves several distinct activities. These activities are designed to solicit from the public their requests for specific projects, as well as their comments on the needs of the City and County that are proposed to be addressed with CDBG and HOME dollars.

## **Outreach Efforts - Notification/Consultation**

The beginning of the Action Plan process involves the announcement of the availability of CDBG and HOME funds. This announcement involves a legal notice and direct mailing as described in the Participation section of this plan. The legal notice and mailing will outline the following information:

- a. The amount of funds available for the upcoming program year
- b. A timetable indicating the schedule to be followed in submitting proposals
- c. A summary of eligible and ineligible activities and Consolidated Plan priorities
- d. A date for the preliminary public hearing
- e. Availability of applications

As part of the announcement of these funds the City and County will hold a public hearing for interested parties. At the public hearing the City and County will review the Consolidated Plan priorities and the CDBG and HOME application processes. Interested parties can comment on the current Consolidated Plan priorities, ask questions about project/program eligibility and the application process.

## **Outreach Efforts - Application Kits**

Application packages will be provided by mail to Agencies currently funded under the CDBG Program and to those who have requested an application during the previous year. Additional application packages will be mailed as requested.

Following are the descriptions of the application processes for the CDBG and HOME Programs for both the County and City. Please note that these processes are different.

### CDBG PROGRAM

#### City of Poughkeepsie

##### **APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR FUNDING**

One original application is to be submitted to the City of Poughkeepsie, PO Box 300, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602 by the date noted in the application cover letter.

Applications from human service agencies for program services serving residents Citywide are submitted directly to the City's Office of Social Development.

#### Dutchess County

The Dutchess County Community Development Advisory Committee is the permanent advisory committee for the CDBG Program. The Committee is responsible for the determination of funding allocations to sub-recipients and review of program policy. It is comprised of three chief elected officials, who are members of the Consortium, and four community representatives from the areas of local government, economic development and housing and human services.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE for CDBG FUNDING

One original of each application is to be submitted to the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, 27 High Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 by the date noted in the application ñ typically six months prior to the start of the Program Year. Applications are accepted on an annual basis.

Applications from human service agencies for program services serving residents county-wide are submitted directly to the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. If a human service agency is applying for facilities or housing rehabilitation, those activities are required to be sponsored by the municipality in which the project is located or, if this is not possible, by an alternate sponsoring municipality.

## APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL for CDBG FUNDING

### City of Poughkeepsie

The application process is an annual and competitive one. The review process for applications is as follows:

- Each application is reviewed to verify whether it meets the mandatory Federal eligibility requirements.
- The application is then reviewed for completeness (i.e., budget, etc.)
- Each application receives a preliminary funding recommendation which is presented to the Mayor, City Administrator and Development Director
- Recommendations are reviewed. Requests for additional information are provided, as needed.
- A Draft Action Plan is prepared and made available for public comment for a period of thirty days, during which time, a public hearing is held.
- Final funding determinations are included in the Final Action Plan which is then reviewed and approved by the Common Council prior to submission to Dutchess County for submission to HUD as part of their submission.

### Dutchess County

The application process is an annual and competitive one. The ranking form is developed by County staff and the Community Development Advisory Committee to reflect priorities in the current Consolidated Plan. This form is included in the application kit.

The review process for applications from Consortium municipalities is as follows:

- Each application is reviewed to verify whether it meets the mandatory Federal eligibility requirements.
- A site visit is then conducted and a staff evaluation of the application is completed. This evaluation takes into account many factors, including the timetable of the application, the proposed budget, other funding sources, and overall project feasibility as it relates to the requirements and scope of the CDBG Program.
- The application is then ranked according to the point system on the ranking form.

- Each application receives a preliminary funding recommendation which is presented to the Community Development Advisory Committee.
- The Committee reviews the recommendations. Requests for additional information are secured by the County staff. Final staff funding determinations are recommended to the Community Development Advisory Committee which reviews and approves the recommendations.
- The Advisory Committee recommendations are then submitted to the Dutchess County Executive for review and approval.
- A Draft Action Plan is prepared and made available for public comment for a period of thirty days, during which time, a public hearing is held.

The review process for applications from human service providers requesting funding is the same as municipal applications except that an appointed review committee of human service providers and others reviews the applications and ranks the projects using the human services ranking form prior to the preliminary funding recommendation being presented to the Community Development Advisory Committee.

## HOME PROGRAM

### Dutchess County

#### APPLICATION DEADLINE for HOME FUNDING

One original of each application is to be submitted to the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development, 27 High Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 by the date noted in the application. Applications are typically due six months prior to the beginning of the program year. Technical assistance and information is available for potential applicants throughout the year.

#### APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL for HOME FUNDING

The application process is an annual and competitive one. The review process for applications is as follows:

- The County completes a written preliminary review and a ranking form.
- The County notifies the applicant, in writing, of any omissions and gives them an opportunity to remedy the omissions.
- A site visit is conducted by the County and the County's architectural consultant.
- A final review is completed by the County, taking into consideration the original application, the architect's conclusions, and any additional information provided to correct omissions. The County's recommendations are finalized and forwarded to the Dutchess County Community Development Advisory Committee for their review and approval.
- The Advisory Committee recommendations are then submitted to the Dutchess County Executive for review and approval.
- A Draft Action Plan is prepared and made available for public comment for a period of thirty days, during which time, a public hearing is held.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The City and County will provide technical assistance to municipalities, non-profits and individuals interested in developing proposals to the CDBG and HOME Program. In addition, City and County staff will be available, as requested, to attend public meetings, to advise municipalities, non-profit and community agencies and individuals on the use of CDBG and HOME funds, or to assist in the development of eligible CDBG and HOME projects.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### Consolidated Plan

Two public hearings will be held during the Consolidated Plan development process. These hearings will give the public an opportunity to:

- Identify housing and community development needs
- Comment on priorities developed from the needs assessment